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TO: Burlington City Council
Mayor Miro Weinberger
FROM: Mary O'Neil, Principal Planner
Scott Gustin, Principal Planner & Zoning Division Manager
DATE: February 17, 2022
RE: Proposed CDO Amendment ZA-21-04: Adaptive Reuse Definition

Overview & Background

Adaptive Reuse, in accepted language and common development practice refers to the process of reusing an old site or building for a purpose other than which it was built or for which it was designed, while retaining their historic features. Along with brownfield reclamation, adaptive reuse is often utilized as a key tool in land conservation and the reduction of urban sprawl. Retention and rehabilitation of existing buildings also reduces the consumption of building materials, resources, energy and water needed for new construction.

Adaptive reuse deals with the issues of conservation and heritage policies. When old buildings become unsuitable for their programmatic requirements, as progress in technology, politics, and economics moves faster than the built environment, adaptive reuse comes in as a sustainable option for the reclamation of sites. In many situations, the types of buildings most likely to become subjects of adaptive reuse include 1) industrial buildings, as the process of manufacture moves away from cities; 2) political buildings, such as palaces and buildings which cannot support current and future visitors of the site; and 3) community buildings such as churches or schools where the use has changed over time. (Think the Adams School on South Union Street, or the Steeple Market in Fairfax.)

Adaptive reuse is as an effective way of reducing urban sprawl and environmental impact. By reusing an existing structure within a site, the energy required to create these spaces is lessened, as is the material waste that comes from destroying old sites and rebuilding using new materials. Through adaptive reuse old, unoccupied buildings can become suitable sites for many different types of use. It is the structural example of reduce-reuse-recycle.

The current *Article 13* definition of adaptive reuse misses the key point as to reuse of an historic structure for something other than what it was originally built for. This amendment would revise the definition to include that point.

This amendment was initially referred to the City Council in February 2021 for its first reading. However, shortly after its referral, staff identified a potential conflict with other sections of the *Comprehensive Development Ordinance* that include development incentives for the reuse of historic buildings. This amendment was held at the Council Ordinance Committee until a companion amendment could be brought through the Planning Commission to address this conflict, and is now referred for public hearing and action alongside ZA-22-01.

Proposed Amendment

Amendment Type

Text Amendment	Map Amendment	Text & Map Amendment
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Purpose Statement

The intent of the proposed amendment is to more accurately reflect the intent and purpose of adaptive reuse as it pertains to the reuse of historic buildings.

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Proposed Amendments

The following amendments to the Burlington CDO are included in this proposal:

1. Amend "Adaptive Reuse" definition in Sec. 13.1.2 Definitions

Relationship to planBTV

This following discussion of conformance with the goals and policies of planBTV is prepared in accordance with the provisions of 24 V.S.A. §4441(c).

Theme	Dynamic	Distinctive	Inclusive	Connected
Land Use	Conserve	Sustain		Grow

Compatibility with Proposed Future Land Use & Density

The proposed amendment does not impact the types or density of potential land use and density. Standards as to adaptive reuse remain unchanged. The amendment revises the *Article 13* definition to better reflect the intent and purpose of adaptive reuse of historic buildings.

Impact on Safe & Affordable Housing

The proposed amendment has no impact on housing safety or affordability.

Planned Community Facilities

The proposed amendment has no impact on planned community facilities.

Process Overview

The following chart summarizes the current stage in the zoning amendment process, and identifies any recommended actions:

Planning Commission Process				
Draft Amendment prepared by: Staff, PC OC	Presentation to & discussion by Commission 1/26/21	Approved for Public Hearing 1/26/21	Public Hearing 2/23/21	Approved & forwarded to Council
City Council Process				
First Read & Referral to Ordinance Cmte 3/8/21	Ordinance Cmte discussion 1/19/22	Ordinance Cmte recommend as is	Second Read & Public Hearing 2/22/22	CCOC Recommends Approval & Adoption
				Rejected